

CHAPTER 4 - WHITE HOUSE REFERRALS

- 4-1. **GUIDANCE FOR PREPARING AND PROCESSING RESPONSES TO WHITE HOUSE REFERRALS.** White House Referrals are letters sent to the President and Vice President of the United States, and the First Lady. These letters are forwarded to the Department of the Interior through ExecSec for response, for appropriate action, or for information. ExecSec assigns the signature level and due date (9 working days from receipt in ExecSec per the White House).

- 4-2. **INTERIM REPLIES.** It is permissible to send interims to White House Referrals. See Chapter 2, Procedures for Preparing Letters, for specific guidance and signature levels.

Copy Requirement for Interim Replies. ExecSec **MUST** receive two sets of the interim response. A set consists of “copies” of the interim, ExecSec tasking profile, and the White House Referral with the incoming letter.

ExecSec will forward one copy to the White House and retain one copy for their file. These copies will be used to update their records and assign the new due date. If these copies are not provided, the controlled correspondence goes on the White House and ExecSec’s overdue lists.

- 4-3. **PAPER WASTE REDUCTION.** The following breakdown shows the minimum copies required for a letter ready for signature:

Director	Original, enclosure(s) FWS file copies (2) ES (2 sets) FWS surname copy
Regional Director	As established by Region ES (2 sets) CCU
Assistant Secretary	Original, enclosure(s) Yellow surname ladder File copies (3) ES (2 sets) FWS surname copy
Secretary	Original, enclosure(s) Yellow surname ladder File copies (3) ES (2 sets) FWS surname copy

- 4-4. **OPENING SENTENCE.** The opening sentence must indicate that we are responding on behalf of the President, Vice President, or Mrs. [name]. These examples are based upon the signature level as follows:

Director or Regional Director:

President [name] has asked the Fish and Wildlife Service to respond to your letter of (date) regarding _____.

Thank you for your letter of (date) to President [name] supporting _____.

Your letter dated ____ to President [name] concerning ____ has been referred to the Fish and Wildlife Service for a response.

When an identical letter has been sent to the President and the Secretary (or the Director):

Your letters dated ____ to President [name] and Secretary [name] have been referred to the Fish and Wildlife Service for response.

Assistant Secretary:

President [name] has asked the Department of the Interior to respond to your letter of (date) opposing _____.

Thank you for your letter of (date) to President [name] concerning _____.

Your letter dated ____ to President [name] supporting ____ has been referred to the Department of the Interior for a response.

When an identical letter has been sent to the President and the Secretary (or the Assistant Secretary):

President [name] and Secretary [name] have asked me to respond to your letters of (date) regarding _____.

Secretary:

President [name] has asked me to respond to your letter of (date) concerning _____.

When an identical letter has been sent to the President and the Secretary:

Thank you for your letters of (date) to President [name] and me regarding _____.

4-5. **FINAL MAILING.** Instructions for mailing the signed response are as follows:

- a. Washington Office. CCU will forward the original, enclosure (if any), envelope, and ExecSec copies (2) to ExecSec for mailing. The original White House Referral (blue) and incoming MUST be included in one set.

- b. Regional Office. Responses signed at the Regional level CAN be mailed. ExecSec copies (2) must be sent to ES 7229 MIB. The original White House Referral (blue) and incoming MUST be included in one set. ExecSec will forward required copies to the White House.

4-6. **DRAFT FOR SIGNATURE OF WHITE HOUSE STAFF.** When the White House requests a draft for the signature of White House staff, the Service will prepare a draft response. The White House decides who and if the letter will be signed. The draft response will be typed on plain white bond paper with the text double spaced. Regions may be required to provide a draft to the Washington Office.

THESE REQUESTS CANNOT BE SIGNED BY REGIONAL DIRECTORS.

The draft response will respond for the President and will not be on behalf of the Service or the Department of the Interior.

- a. Transmittal Memorandum. The draft response will be forwarded to the White House by a memorandum from the Director through the Assistant Secretary. This memorandum does not require Departmental surnames. The following is a sample transmittal memorandum.

Memorandum

To: [Name], Agency Liaison
The White House

Through: Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

From: Director

Subject: White House Referral #____ from _____ regarding _____.

NOTE: The format provided above is based upon the signature of the Director. This format will be adjusted according to the signature level required. See appropriate chapter according to the required signature level.

All drafts provided to the White House for signature MUST go through the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks as a matter of protocol.

- b. Body of Memorandum. The text of the memorandum should be short, simple and to the point. Do not make the memorandum complicated.

Following is a sample text:

The subject White House Referral requested a draft response be prepared for the signature of White House staff. The attached draft was prepared by the Fish and Wildlife Service for your use. Also attached is the subject Referral including the original incoming.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me [or _____] at 202/208-____ .

- c. Attachments. Attached to the original memorandum will be the draft response, the White House Referral (blue), and the original incoming.
- d. Copy Requirements. Copy requirements are the same as outlined in Chapter 5 Memoranda. The exception is as follows:

Two complete sets will be provided to ExecSec. Each set will include a copy of the transmittal memorandum, ExecSec tasking profile, the White House Referral with incoming letter. **NOTE:** This instruction is noted on every ExecSec tasking profile for White House Referrals.

- e. ExecSec Action. After the memorandum is signed by the Director and the Assistant Secretary, CCU will forward the original plus two copies to ExecSec. ExecSec will forward the original to the White House. **WASHINGTON OFFICE ONLY!**

NOTE: The Service does not forward to the White House. These MUST go through ExecSec.